Plan period. The aircraft being evaluated are A340-300 of Airbus Industrie, B777-200 of Boeing Airplane Company and MD-11 of Mc Donnel Douglas Corporation.

[English]

Improvement in Telecom Services

3415. SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE :
SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently contemplated steps to monitor the improvement in telecom services throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the telecom services are deteriorating day by day; and

(d) whether the Government have formulated any action plan for improvement in telecom services in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For improvement of telecom services throughout the country the following norms have been fixed:

(i) Local Shift: within seven days.

(ii) Inter-exchange shift: within 15 days.

(iii) Inter-state shift: within 30 days.

(iv) fault clearance: within 48 hours.

(v) New Telephone Connections: within 15 days.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir. Field officers have been instructed to put all out efforts to keep the service parameters within norms. Monitoring of these parameters is done by field units as well as by Telecom Headquarters.

International flights from Calcutta

3416. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the international flights from Calcutta or divert some of the foreign flights from Mumbai and Delhi to Calcutta; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). The Government of India as a matter of policy, if offering various incentives to foreign airlines to operate to Calcutta like the ability to combine Calcutta with other prime gate ways, liberal fifth freedom rights, liberal terms of commercial agreements etc. In certain cases the ability to operate to prime gate ways like Delhi and Bombay has been made conditional to their operating to Calcutta. The actual operations, however, depend on the commercial judgement of the airlines concerned.

Conversion of Exchanges into Electronic Exchanges

3417. PROF. P.J. KURIEN :
SHRI T. GOVINDAN :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of exchanges which have been converted into electronic exchanges in Kerala during 1995-96, district-wise?

(b) the number of exchanges likely to be converted in the State during 1996-97 and 1997-98, district-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to replace old system of Kasaragod Telephone Exchange in the State with modern technology to cater the greater needs of the people of Malabar area who are waiting for telephone connection for the last six years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) 34 Telephone exchanges were converted into electronic during 1995-96 in Kerala. District-wise details are given in enclosed as *Statement-I.*

(b) The number of exchanges likely to be converted into electronic during 1996-97 in Kerala, district-wise is enclosed in *Statement-II.* The commissioning programme for 1997-98 shall be finalised in the first quarter of 1997-98 after the budget for 1997-98 is approved.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The equipment required for replacement of 4000 lines ICP Cross Bar exchanges is likely to be received by March, 1997 and replacement is expected to take place by the middle of 1997-98.